



Chris O'Neil, APR

Director of Communications

Savannah River National Laboratory

EDUCATION

Boston University, M.S., Public Relations

Charter Oak State College, B.S., Communications

University of Phoenix, A.A., Criminal Justice

POSITION Chris O'Neil, APR, is the Director of Communications at Savannah River National Laboratory. He is SRNL's senior advisor to leadership for external and internal communications and leads his team in the integration, coordination and synchronization of communications designed to build understanding of and support for SRNL's mission, work and people.

EXPERIENCE Chris came to SRNL in October 2021 and has nearly 35 years of government communication experience earned through full-time and collateral-duty public affairs positions with the National Transportation Safety Board, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, U.S. Coast Guard and the U.S. Air Force. He was twice hand-selected to write the public affairs annexes to Department of Homeland Security Plans for maritime and land mass migration. He contributed to a rewrite of the National Response Team Joint Information Center Manual, focusing on better alignment between the ESF-15 and NRT JIC structures and functions. As the NTSB's Chief of Media Relations Chris modernized the division's standard operating procedures, developed media relations policy for the organization, and incorporated communication planning, measurement and analysis in the board's approach to communications. As the Deputy Assistant Commissioner for the Office of Public Affairs at CBP, Chris drafted public affairs policy that facilitated transparency in the release of CBP's updated Use of Force Policy, Use of Force Incident Teams and CBP's Use of Force Review Board. Serving as the Coast Guard's Chief of Media Relations, Chris developed and implemented policy and doctrine for all Coast Guard media relations activities and served as a national spokesperson. He also served as the Chief of Strategic Communication on the Deepwater Horizon BP Oil Spill Response National Incident Command Staff, from May to July 2010, and served as the Gulf Coast Incident Command/Unified Area Command Public Information Officer in New Orleans, from October to November 2010. He deployed to Juneau, Alaska, to serve as the external affairs officer for Operation Arctic Shield 2012. Chris earned his Accreditation in Public Relations in 2019.

RECENT NOTEWORTHY Chris' tenure as the Immediate Past President of the National Association of Government Communicators ended in June 2022. He served on the association's board of directors for nine years.